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Bulgaria

Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards

New Import Requirements/Certificates for Products of Animal Origin 2002

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Report Highlights:

A new format for USDA/FSIS export certificates has been developed for red meat. The Bulgarian veterinary Service will require new export certificates effective July 1, 2002. A new format of APHIS export certificates is being negotiated as well with a possible implementation date later in the year.

Includes PSD changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Sofia [BU],BU

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New Import Requirements

In 2001, the Bulgarian Veterinary Service announced that a new format of import certificates will be required for all countries exporting products of animal origin to Bulgaria starting March 1, 2002. However, new U.S. certificates are effective on July 1, 2002.

As a result, USDA prepared to meet these new requirements so that U.S. meat and poultry could continue to enter this market. Bulgarian veterinary officials visited Washington (on a TIRF program) to negotiate the new forms of FSIS and APHIS export certificates to Bulgaria. In addition, the Regional APHIS Attache met with the veterinary service in Bulgaria. The AgOffice in Sofia has provided follow up assistance for completion of these negotiations.

According to U.S. customs data, U.S. poultry exports to Bulgaria in 2001 (till November) totaled \$8.7 million or a 205 percent increase compared to the same period in 2000. According to industry sources and FAS estimates, taking into account the transshipments through Greece, and partly through Macedonia, the U.S. poultry exports to this market are estimated to be double the official figures. Total U.S. red meat (mainly pork) exports in 2001 (till November) hit a record amount of \$1.4 million. Prospects for the U.S. red meat and poultry exports to Bulgaria for 2002 are good with expectations for further increases.

FSIS Export Certificates

As of February 2002, Bulgarian Vet Service has verbally agreed to the following with USDA:

- the standard FSIS 9060-5 export certificate for red meat, poultry meat and products will continue to be used for exports of U.S. products to Bulgaria with some modifications. Modifications include "breaking" of this single export certificate in several different certificates - for poultry meat; for pork and bovine meat (red meats); for poultry, pork and beef meat products.
- the modified Bulgarian certificates are based on models which are already used for U.S. products exported to Poland and Hungary. The export certificate for poultry meat is based on the certificate currently issued for Hungary; and for pork, beef and meat and poultry products, the certification language is from certificates that FSIS currently issues for Poland.
- New modified export certificates will consist of two pages - the first will be the regular FSIS 9050-5 format, and the second page will be similar to the one which is currently issued for Hungary/Poland.
- all FSIS certificates will be bilingual- in English and Bulgarian.
- other FSIS certificates such as those for horse meat and inedible meat and poultry products are also in the process of preparation but are not expected to be significant since Bulgaria is not

traditionally importing these products from the U.S.

The deadline for the new modified U.S. certificates was agreed to be July 1, 2002 (date of export). The Bulgarian Vet Service is ready to provide one month grace period for shipments entering Bulgaria with "old" certificates issued before July 1. However, no "old" USDA export certificates will be accepted after August 1, 2002.

APHIS Export Certificates

Although Bulgaria is not a significant market for live animal and plant products managed by APHIS, Bulgarian Vet Service has negotiated on a format of APHIS export certificates. Based on the negotiations so far, Bulgaria is ready to accept export certificates already used by APHIS for exports to the EU member - states with some modifications. It is expected that the format of all APHIS export certificates will be fully completed and agreed between APHIS and Bulgarian Vet Service later in 2002.

New General Import Requirements

In December 2001, the Bulgarian Vet Service undated import requirements for all products of animal origin. The 2002 import requirements are not more stringent than those in 2001 but explicitly outline some issues which are of higher importance in trade due to smuggling problems. For example, the number one import requirement (no exceptions are made) for all shipments is that they must be accompanied by an original veterinary certificate issued by competent authorities in the country of origin, and with a text in Bulgarian language.

The export veterinary certificate must include:

- name of product, quantity, purpose of use;
- name of country of origin of the product;
- name of company-exporter;
- export number of the establishment registered for exports (company, slaughtering house, processing facility, warehouse or refrigerated warehouse);
- name of country importer;
- name and exact address of the company importer;
- date of production (expiration date);
- number and type of package;
- type and numbers of the specialized transportation vehicles, numbers of containers;
- veterinary-sanitary statement by which the authorized person issuing the document officially declares the wholesomeness, safety and purpose of use of the product;
- date and place of issuing of the document;
- name and self signed signature of the officially authorized state official issuing the document;
- original stamp of the state veterinary service.

Packaging of meat and meat products have to meet the following requirements:

- it must be allowed for use by the respective health authorities;
- must guarantee efficient protection during the transportation of the meat;
- it must not change the organoleptic qualities of the products;
- it must not transfer substances innocuous for people;

Marks on the packaging have to be clear, readable and to reflect correctly the identification of the commodity written in the veterinary certificate.

On each consumer package, a label must be placed containing the following:

- name of product;
- trade mark;
- data for contents;
- net weight of the product;
- way of use;
- production data (expiration date);
- way of storage;
- information about preservatives, coloring agents and/or additives.

See detailed information about these import requirements for meat and poultry and products in report attachments.

Attachment 1. Veterinary medical requirements for import of meat and meat products

General Requirements:

1. Each shipment of meat and the meat products must be accompanied by an original veterinary certificate issued by a competent state authorities in the country of origin with text in Bulgarian language.

2. The certificate must include:

- name of product, quantity, purpose of use;
- name of country of origin of the product;
- name of company-exporter;
- export number of the establishment registered for exports (company, slaughtering house, processing facility, warehouse or refrigerated warehouse);
- name of country importer;
- name and exact address of the company importer;
- date of production (expiration date);
- number and type of package;
- type and numbers of the specialized transportation vehicles, numbers of containers;
- veterinary-sanitary statement by which the authorized person issuing the document officially declares the wholesomeness, safety and purpose of use of the product;
- date and place of issuing of the document;
- name and self signed signature of the officially authorized state official issuing the document;
- original stamp of the state veterinary service.

3. Imports of meat and meat products must be executed from slaughterhouses, processing enterprises, warehouses and refrigerators, approved by the competent veterinary authorities of the exporting country.

4. Package of meat and meat product to meet the following requirements:

- it must be allowed in use by the respective health authorities;
- must be strong and must guarantee an efficient protection during the transportation of the meat;
- it must not change the organoleptic qualities of the products;
- it must not transfer substances innocuous for people;

5. Marks on the packaging (carcass halves or quarters) to be clear, readable and to reflect correctly the identification of the commodity written in the veterinary certificate.

6. On each consumer package of products, a label must be placed containing the following provisions:

--name of product;
--trade mark;
--data for contents;
--net weight of the product;
--way of use;
--production data (expiration date);
--way of storage;
--information about preservatives, coloring agents and/or additives.

Special Requirements

The veterinary certificate verifies that:

1. Meat and meat products must originate from animals, born or raised on the territory of the exporting country or have been on the territory of the country at least 3 months before the slaughtering. Animals should be imported from countries in which there was not a registered FMD case caused by any type of the virus for 24 months and no vaccination against FMD had been done in the last 12 months. No cattle-plague to be registered in the last 12 months.

2. Meat and meat products to originate from animals which are not vaccinated against brucellosis and tuberculosis.

3. Meat and meat products are safety and suitable for consumption and do not contain anabolic oestrogen, tireostatics, beta-blockers, antibiotics, heavy and toxic metals, inhibitors and other substances innocuous to the human health exceeding the hygienic norms adopted in Bulgaria;

4. Meat and the meat products have not been treated with ionizing radiation and ultraviolet rays and have not been treated with coloring agents, conservants and other substances prohibited by the Ministry of Health (according to Ordinance #45 of 01/12/1995 which is harmonized with EU Directives #94/36 "Coloring agents for the food industry", 94/35 - "Sweeteners for the food products", and 95/2 "Food additives different from coloring agents and sweeteners").

5. Meat and meat products are obtained from healthy animals free of infectious and parasitic diseases, as follows:

A. Cattle and Bulls:

1. Cattle for slaughtering are clinically healthy and originate from farms which are under permanent veterinary medical control. Born and raised on the territory of the exporting country.

2. Territory of the country is free from:

--FMD of all types - in the last 24 months and no vaccination has been done in the last 12 months;

--Vesiculosus stomatous (disease) - in the last 12 months;

– Cattle-plague, Pleuropneumonia on cattle and Bluetongue - in the last 12 months and no vaccination has been done against these diseases.

3. The exporting country is free from Encephalopatis spongiosis in line with Art.3.2.13.2 of zoo sanitary health code of the Organization of International Epizootic (low incidensity).

4. The farm from which the animals originate is free from:

- Para tuberculosis - in the last 5 years;

-Thrihomionosis, vibriosis (campilo bakteriosis) and leptospirosis in the last 12 months;

-Infectious Rinothraheitit and Mucosious disease - viral diarrhea - in the last 12 months;

-Anthrax - in the last 30 days

-Tuverolosis and Rabies - in the last 6 months;

-Brucellosis - in the last 12 months and no vaccination has been done against the disease;

- Enzootic Leucosis - the farm to be officially free from the disease.

5. Animals have not been treated with anabolic oestrogen, tireostatics, beta-blockers, and inhibitors.

6. Destined for exports animals for slaughtering are put under veterinary control in the exporting country for 21 days and have been tested with the following veterinary tests:

– animals have been tested for brucellosis and tuberculosis and showed negative results;

B. Sheep and Goats:

1. Animals for slaughtering to be clinically healthy and to originate from countries favorable in regard to:

–FMD, caused by all types of the virus, in the last 24 months and no vaccination has been done in the last 12 months;

-- Bluetongue - the country should be free in the last 12 months and no vaccination against the disease is done;

–Measles - the country should be free in the last 12 months and no vaccination against the disease is done;

–Rinderpest - the country should be free in the last 12 months and no vaccination against the disease is done;

–Scrappy and Medy -Visna - the country should be free in the last 3 years.

3. The farm from which animals originate should be free from :

–Brucellosis - in the last 12 months and no vaccination against the disease is done;

- Rabies and Tuberculosis - in the last 6 months;
- Anthrax - in the last 30 days;

C. Swine

1. Swine destined for slaughtering are clinically healthy.
2. The country of origin is favorable in regard to:

- FMD, caused by all types of the virus in the last 24 months and no vaccination has been done during the last 12 months;
- Pestis africana suum - in the last 12 months
- Vesiculosus disease - in the last 12 months;
- Encephalomyelitis suum (Teshen disease) - in the last 12 months and no vaccination has been done against this disease.

3. The farm from which animals originate should be free from:

- Brucellosis - in the last 12 months;
- Pestis suum (classical swine plague) - must not have been found during the last 12 months in radius 60 kilometers around the farm and no vaccination has been done against this disease;
- Morbus Aujeszky - no clinical symptoms to have been found during the last 12 months;
- Gastroenteritis infection (dysentery), leptospirosis, transmissible gastroenteritis and salmonellosis in the last 12 months.

D. Rabbits

1. Animals are born and raised on the territory of the exporting country and have been for 30 days in a farm free of infectious and parasitic diseases under veterinary-medical control of the official veterinary authorities. Upon the tests prior to exports, rabbits should not show any clinical signs of any disease.

2. They should originate from farms which :

- have not registered salmonellosis, pasteurellosis, leptospirosis, tuberculosis, spirochetosis, myxomatosis, Haemorrhagic contagiosa, toxoplasmosis, brucellosis and measles in the last 12 months;
- are not affected by dermatomycosis (trichofytia, microsporiosis etc.)
- no Tularemia has been registered in the last 12 months in the radius of 50 kilometers around the farm.

Signed in January 2002

Attachment 2. Veterinary medical requirements for import of slaughtered poultry, poultry products, eggs and egg products for food purposes

General Requirements:

1. Each shipment must be accompanied by an original veterinary certificate issued by a competent state authorities in the country of origin with text in Bulgarian language.

2. The certificate must include:

- name of product, quantity, purpose of use;
- name of country of origin of the product;
- name of company-exporter;
- export number of the establishment and name of the producer company;
- name of country importer;
- name and exact address of the company importer;
- date of production (expiration date);
- number and type of package;
- type and numbers of the specialized transportation vehicles, numbers of containers;
- veterinary-sanitary statement by which the authorized person issuing the document officially declares the wholesomeness, safety and purpose of use of the product;
- date and place of issuing of the document;
- name and self signed signature of the officially authorized state official issuing the document;
- original stamp of the state veterinary service.

3. Package of products to meet the following requirements:

- it must be allowed for use by the respective health authorities;
- must be strong and must guarantee an efficient protection during the transportation of the meat;
- it must not change the organoleptic qualities of the products;
- it must not transfer substances innocuous for people;

4. On each consumer package of products, a label must be placed containing the following provisions:

- name of product;
- trade mark;
- data for contents;
- net weight of the product;
- way of use;
- production data (expiration date);
- way of storage;
- information about preservatives, coloring agents and/or additives.

Special Requirements

The veterinary certificate verifies that:

1. Slaughtered poultry, poultry products, eggs and egg products must be obtained from slaughtering houses and establishments approved for exports by the state veterinary service of the exporting country.
2. Poultry originate from the exporting country.
3. Slaughtered poultry, poultry products, eggs and egg products originate from farms favorable in regard to infectious diseases on poultry included in list "A", "B" and "C" of the International Organization of Epizootic in Paris, in the last 3 months. Upon vaccination and re-vaccination against Newcastle disease live lentogenic or inactivated vaccines have been used and they are reflected (written) in the veterinary certificate.
4. Meat of slaughtered poultry, poultry products, eggs and egg products are recognized as suitable for human food purposes.
5. Meat of slaughtered poultry, poultry products, eggs and egg products do not contain preservatives, have not been treated with coloring agents, with ionizing radiation and ultraviolet rays and do not contain anabolic oestrogen, tireostatics, antibiotics, sulphonamids, and other artificial oestrogen, hormonal substances.
6. Meat of slaughtered poultry, poultry products, eggs and egg products do not contain residues of heavy and other toxic metals, chlorine-organic pesticides, medical substances, pathogenic and sanitary indicative microorganisms exceeding adopted in Bulgaria hygienic norms.

Signed in January 2002